

Majoring in the Minors Part 6 – Micah

Joseph Carty / General

Majoring in the Minors / Micah (prophet) / Micah 7:18

- Sermon is about Discipline
 - As parents
 - hard to know
 - how severe
 - how gentle
 - positive reinforcement
 - negative reinforcement
- God also uses Discipline

Benjamin Spock led the way among child rearing professionals in instructing parents not to discipline their children. He said that doing so would damage children's ego. Later in his life he realized that he had made a mistake and said:

“We have reared a generation of brats. Parents aren’t firm enough with their children for fear of losing their love or incurring their resentment. This is a cruel deprivation that we professionals have imposed on mothers and fathers. Of course, we did it with the best of intentions. We didn’t realize until it was too late how our know-it-all attitude was undermining the self assurance of parents.”

Source: Baptist Press, November, 6, 2007

- Micah is the story
- of God disciplining
- His wayward children.

Background

Micah 1:1 ESV

The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

- Micah is from Moresheth
- 25 miles southwest

- of Jerusalem.
- near Philistia
- near Gath

- Country boy
 - agricultural area
 - not from palace

- Dates
 - Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
 - Jotham good king
 - Ahaz – evil king
 - Hezekiah – very good king

- 739–686

- Fall of Isreal
 - Northern Kingdom
 - 722
- Then Assyria
 - came knocking on door
 - in Judah
 - Siege of Jerusalem.
- Micah was a contemporary:
 - Hosea
 - Isaiah

Outline

- 3 Equal parts
 - Description of Sin and
 - Proclamation of Judgment

- Promises of Restoration
- Call for Repentance

Sins of Israel and Judah

Micah 3:8 (ESV)

But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD,
and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and
to Israel his sin.

- Not easy to
 - point out other's failures.
- Giving unsolicited
 - constructive criticism
 - not received well.

Greed and Theft

Micah 2:1–2 (ESV)

Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil on their beds!

--

When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand.

--

They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.

- God accused them
 - see what they want
 - take it.

False Prophets

Micah 2:11 (ESV)

If a man should go about and utter wind and lies, saying, "I will preach to you of wine and strong drink," he would be the preacher for this people!

- False prophets

- lies
- babbling
- error and falsehood.

Bribery and Extortion

Micah 3:11 (ESV)

Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money; yet they lean on the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us."

- Judges taking bribes.
- Priests teaching error
 - when paid to do so.
- Prophets paid to
 - prophesy good future.

During the fourteenth century Raynald III, was a duke in what is now Belgium. As the result of a violent quarrel, Raynald's younger brother Edward successfully revolted against him. When Edward captured Raynald he built a room around him featuring windows and a door and promised

him that the day he left the room his title and property would be returned to him.

The problem with this arrangement was that Raynald was grossly overweight and could not fit through the openings in the room. Raynald needed to lose weight before he could leave the room. Edward knew that his older brother could not control his appetite and sent him delicious food every day. As you may imagine, Raynald grew fatter during this time.

Anytime someone accused Duke Edward of treating Raynald cruelly he said: "My brother is not a prisoner. He may leave when he so wills."

Raynald stayed in that room for ten years and wasn't released until after Edward died in battle. By then his health was so ruined he died within a year. He was a prisoner of his own appetite.

Just as Raynald was enslaved by his appetite, sin will enslave all those who yield to it.

- Israel was
 - living in sin...
 - All while pretending
 - to be followers of God.

- The last part
 - is what upset God.

- The other nations were
 - doing these things...

- Problem is
 - Isreal knew better
 - Didn't make good choices.
 - Pretended to be doing right.

- For this reason
 - God had to
 - discipline His children.

A little girl said to her teacher, "Miss Hayes, I don't want to scare you, but my dad said, If my grades don't improve, someone's going to get a spanking!"

The Purpose of Discipline

- The purpose of

- discipline is not
 - pleasure of punishment.
- It is to develop and grow!
- We get the word
 - disciple from
 - discipline.
- God has called
 - us all to be
 - His disciples.
- I suppose that means
 - we shouldn't be
 - surprised when

- God has a way
 - to help us grow:
 - discipline.

Pablo Casals was considered the greatest cellist to ever live. When he was 95 years old he was asked why he continued to practice 6 hours a day. He answered, "Because I think I'm making progress."

Source: Your Road Map for Success, John Maxwell

Coming Judgment

Micah 1:2-5 (ESV)

Hear, you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it, and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

--

For behold, the LORD is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.

--

And the mountains will melt under him, and the valleys will split open, like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.

--

All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel...

- Like a parent who gives
 - grace and grace
 - finally have to
 - discipline.

- The heart that
 - wants to serve God
 - often turns to Him
 - through hardship.

Three recruiters were to address high school seniors. Each recruiter represented a branch of the military (the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps) and was to have fifteen minutes.

The Army and Navy recruiters got carried away, so when it came time for the Marine to speak, he had just two minutes. He walked up and stood utterly silent for a full sixty seconds, half of his time.

Then he said, "I doubt whether there are two or three of you in this room who would even stand a chance in the Marine Corps. But I want to see those two or three immediately in the dining hall when we are dismissed."

He turned smartly and sat down. When he arrived in the dining hall, there was a crowd of students interested in the Marines.

The recruiter knew that commitment cannot take place without recognizing the potential for difficulty.

- Many respond
- to negative reinforcement.

- That's why God
- uses it!

Promises of Restoration

- God gives prophecies
- about Israel getting
- restored after the

- coming Judgment.
 - (which never happened)
-
- But much of the
 - prophecies are about
 - the coming Messiah.
-
- It is through Christ
 - that we can all get
 - personal restoration.
 - (not national).

Restoration

Micah 4:1–2 (ESV)

It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, and many nations shall come, and say:

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

- God knew that

- after the judgment

- their hearts would be
 - softened to hear

 - voice of God.

- People typically

- seek God most

- earnestly when
 - they have few other

 - options!

William McPherson was the superintendent for a stone quarry when a blast severely injured him. He lost his eyesight and both hands in the explosion. He was determined to read the Bible, and learned to read

raised letters with the tip of his tongue. It is said that he read through the Bible four times in this manner.

Source: Annual Report of the American Bible Society, Volume 97

- The theocracy of Israel
 - was never re-established.

- So why did God
 - give this prophecy
 - if He knew it
 - wouldn't come true?

- This is what
 - we call
 - conditional prophecy.

- Prophecy that depends
 - upon our actions.

- (Jonah as example).

Conditional Prophecy vs. Spiritual Israel

- The other way of
- interpreting these
- prophecies that
 - never were fulfilled
 - to Ancient Israel is
 - the fact that
 - they could be
 - given to modern
 - Israel.

- The NT says:

Galatians 3:29 ESV

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

- This means:
 - if you are true
 - believer...
 - you are like
 - "spiritual Israelite."

- Some of these promises
 - are fulfilled spiritually
 - to Christians...

- Either in this life
 - or in the New Jerusalem
 - after 2nd coming.

Prophecies of Messiah

- Full and complete restoration
- only comes through
- Jesus Christ.

Micah 5:2 (ESV)

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

- This verse is
- so clear!
- Tells the exact location
- of birth of Christ.
- Powerful promise
- Christ coming!

- Jesus fulfilled
- hundreds of
- messianic prophecies
 - from the OT
 - exactly!

Judgment on Assyria

- God also promises
- that he would bring
- justice upon
 - Kingdom that
 - destroyed Israel.
- Assyria would be
- destroyed by Babylon.

- Why?
 - because they claim
 - they did it in their
 - own power.

- But the truth:
 - God allowed them to
 - destroy Israel because
 - they needed discipline.

In the fifties the major discipline problems in our public schools were cigarette smoking, skipping class, running in the halls, spit balls, chewing gum, and whispering in class.

Today – the major problems are deadly weapons – kids carrying guns, knives, and even assault weapons. This is followed by arson, drugs, vandalism, and drunkenness.

Recently in Florida a high school teacher observed a number of boys in the corner of the gymnasium on their hands and knees.

Rushing up to the boys, the teacher demanded, “ What are you doing?” One of the boys looked up and answered, “ We’re shooting dice!” The teacher responded with, “ Oh, thank goodness. I thought you were praying.”

(Source Unknown, Lou Nicholes – Missionary/Author).

Plea for Repentance

- Before the coming
- judgment.

- God repeatedly asked
- His people to
- come back to Him
 - and advert the judgment!

- Call for repentance.

As a parent

“this is last warning”

Next time,

punishment!

Micah 6:7-8 (ESV)

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

--

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

--

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you

--

but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

- God was tired of
- His people living
- double lives.

- Claiming to be
 - followers of Him
 - but living the lifestyle
 - of the world.
- They had the outward form
 - but lacked the
 - True Righteousness.
- Her Micah describes
 - what God is really looking for.
 - True Righteousness is:

“to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God”

Offers of Grace

- Yet God,
 - offered grace
 - again and again.

- Even then,
 - right before the
 - coming judgment
 - He was willing
 - to forgive them
 - if they would only
 - turn back to Him!

Micah 7:18 (ESV)

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.

- We serve a God
- who is continually
- forgiving us
 - extending grace.

- > Even today
- > God is offering His grace.

- > But we know
- > this world won't
- > last forever.

- > At some point,
- > God must bring an end.

- > God is calling today,

- > accept my grace

- > live for me.

I heard about a young boy who went off to one of these extremely expensive universities. The bills were coming in monthly to his parents, and they were struggling to keep their heads above water. One day the boy's mother received a letter from him that read like this: "Dear Mom: I'm writing to inform you that I have flunked all of my courses. I had an accident and totally wrecked my car, I owe the clothing store in town \$2000, and I have been suspended for the next semester because of misconduct. I am coming home, prepare Dad!" His mother wrote a one line letter back to him that just said this: "Dear son: Dad is prepared, prepare yourself."

Appeal

- Accept Grace of God

- Live for Him!

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